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UNCLAS ABU DHABI 04134

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ACTION: PAO  
INFO: POL AMB DCM ECON

DISSEMINATION: PAO  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: PAO:HOLSIN-WINDECKER  
DRAFTED: PAO:WWROBERTSON  
CLEARED: PAO:HOLSIN-WINDECKER

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1799  
RUENAAA/SECNAV WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0935  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0964  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 004134

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP; NEA/PPD; NEA/RA; INR/R/MR; PA;  
INR/NESA; INR/B; IIP/G/NEA-SA  
WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE; NSC  
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA  
USCINCCENT FOR POLAD  
LONDON FOR GOLDRICH  
LONDON PASS TO MOC  
PARIS FOR ZEYA

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: KAREN HUGHES'S MIDDLE EAST VISIT

11. SUMMARY: AN EDITORIAL IN THE POPULAR UAE DAILY "AL-KHALEEJ"  
9/27 NOTED THAT UNLESS THE U.S. CHANGES ITS POLICY TOWARDS THE  
ARABS AND BECOMES A FAIR AND JUST PLAYER IN THE MIDDLE EAST  
CONFLICT, NEITHER KAREN HUGHES NOR ANY OTHER AMERICAN ENVOY WILL  
SUCCEED IN IMPROVING THE U.S. IMAGE IN THE ARAB WORLD. END  
SUMMARY.

12. UNDER THE HEADLINE "IMPROVING AMERICA'S IMAGE WOULD BE A  
MIRACLE", SHARJAH-BASED PAN-ARAB DAILY "AL KHALEEJ," (CIRCULATION  
85,000) EDITORIALIZED:

"WHAT WOULD KAREN HUGHES, PRESIDENT BUSH'S ENVOY TO REGIONAL  
CAPITALS, DO TO SUCCEED IN HER MISSION THAT AIMS TO IMPROVE THE  
IMAGE OF HER ADMINISTRATION AFTER ALL IT DID AGAINST THE PEOPLE  
OF THE REGION? KAREN HUGHES NEEDS A MIRACLE FOLLOWING THE  
RELEASE OF MANY POLLS IN THE ARAB WORLD THAT SHOWED THAT ARABS DO  
NOT HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION, THAT HAS NO  
CREDIBILITY AND A POLICY THAT HAS NO WISDOM. THE MISSION OF  
HUGHES IS DOOMED TO FAILURE AS LONG AS THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION  
WANTS TO CONTINUE RIDICULING THE ARABS AND BLACKMAILING THEM  
UNTIL THE ENTIRE REGION FALLS PREY TO THE POLICY OF HEGEMONY THAT  
VIEWS THE WORLD FROM A ZIONIST PERSPECTIVE. IN ORDER FOR HUGHES

TO SUCCEED, SHE MUST BEGIN IN WASHINGTON, AND NOT CAIRO OR RIYADH OR ANY OTHER ARAB OR MUSLIM CAPITAL. CAN THE U.S. ADHERE TO WHAT THE WORLD COMMUNITY, INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY AND HUMAN RIGHT SAY AND ENDEAVOR TO APPLY THEM OBJECTIVELY? CAN THE U.S. ABANDON ITS DOUBLE STANDARD POLICY, THE IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS AND OCCUPATION OF OTHER NATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SATISFACTION OF ITS HAWKS? CAN THE U.S. STOP ITS SUPPORT OF ZIONIST TERRORISM AND ALLOW INTERNATIONAL LAW TO PREVAIL TO BRING ISRAELI GENERALS TO COURT FOR THE CRIMES THEY COMMITTED IN PALESTINE AND OTHER ARAB NATIONS? WILL THE U.S. BE FAIR AND JUST IN ITS OUTLOOK FOR ALL PEOPLE AND NATIONS TO LET THEM LIVE IN PEACE AND DIGNITY WITHOUT ANY INTERVENTION, AS DO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE? CAN THE U.S. BE DEMOCRATIC AND LET OTHERS DECIDE THEIR OWN DESTINY WITHOUT ANY READY RECIPES THAT EVENTUALLY DO NOT SUIT THEM? "

"THE AGONY TODAY'S WORLD IS ENDURING AS A RESULT OF AMERICAN POLICY, ESPECIALLY UNDER THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION, IS DIFFICULT TO COUNT AND THE ARAB WORLD IS, AFTER ALL, PART OF THIS WORLD, YET IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE OBJECT THAT WAS EXPOSED TO U.S. PRESSURE AND BLACKMAIL, SIMPLY BECAUSE ITS BODY HAS A CANCEROUS TUMOR CALLED THE ZIONIST ENTITY. THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION WANTS THIS CANCER TO GET STRONGER IN ORDER TO WEAKEN THE ARAB BODY TO DEATH. THIS IS WHAT MAKES KAREN HUGHES'S MISSION, OR THE MISSION OF ANY OTHER AMERICAN ENVOY WHO COMES TO MARKET A POLICY THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO IMPROVE, VOID EVEN IF THEY USE ALL THE MAKE-UP IN THE WORLD."

13. Under the headline "US envoy Karen Hughes knows how to stay on message and her message to Muslims is: We care.", Dubai-based, English daily Gulf News, 9/28 (circulation 95,000):

"BUT IT'S NOT CLEAR HOW MANY ARE LISTENING. WHEN THE SAGGING AMERICAN IMAGE ABROAD NEEDED A FACELIFT, PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH TURNED TO HUGHES, A CLOSE ADVISER AND COMMUNICATIONS GURU WHO NURTURED HIS IMAGE THROUGH TWO POLL CAMPAIGNS. HER MODUS OPERANDI THEN, AND NOW ON A TRIP TO EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND TURKEY, IS REMARKABLY SIMILAR: SET BASIC TALKING POINTS, STICK TO THEM, THEN KEEP ROLLING THE TAPE.

"Hughes has stayed relentlessly on point even in the face of pointed questions. Ask her, as did an American University student in Cairo why the United States is so intent on "interfering" in the affairs of other countries, she bats it away with: "Are you referring to the Millennium Challenge Accounts?" When the young woman look mystified, Hughes explained it was a US programme tying American development aid to political and economic reforms in recipient countries. Ask about the invasion of Iraq and the nonexistent weapons of mass destruction and she responds that the world is better off without Saddam Hussain and now that the United States is there other countries should join in ensuring Iraq is stable and secure. Ask about the Arab-Israeli conflict and the answer is: "We want the Palestinians to have jobs and economic opportunity and education and a bright future."

14. Under editorial headline "Hughes thwarted at the outset: Without policy change the US will always be viewed by the Arabs with suspicion..", Dubai-based, English daily Gulf News, 9/28 (circulation 95,000):

"It has long been acknowledged that US President George W. Bush is only comfortable among those he has known for many years.

"Bush has decided that Hughes is eminently placed to be able to "sell" America to the Middle East. Her qualifications being a past ability to keep Bush informed of what the person in the street in middle America is thinking. What precisely is her expertise at being able to parley and forcefully but diplomatically put over American policy to skeptical Middle Eastern leaders is not known. Perhaps Bush was getting his middles mixed.

Hughes is visiting Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Turkey but seems unsure as to who should be doing the listening. Is it her job to listen to what the Middle East is saying of the US, she may wonder? Or for these "soft target" Middle Eastern countries to listen to what the US wants to tell them.

A US official is already on record as saying it is not their intention to change US policy on Middle East issues. Which poses the question: So why is Hughes on her visit?

Anyone who has even a limited understanding of events in the Middle East can spell out loud and clear exactly what aggrieves people in the Middle East with regard to the US. It is their

policy. Therefore, if the avowed intent prior to Hughes visit is for "no change, steady as we go" then it is best for Hughes to return home."

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